

(May 26 - June 13)

2— The Front Room

Engaging the False Mirror
CLAIRE EVANS & GEMMA PARDO &
RAHA RAISSNIA



Francis Bacon once said that human understanding is like a false mirror, whereby each new encounter is colored by, and understood through, our past experiences. St. Louis, for one, is a landscape held in the collective imagination less by our understanding of its present condition, but rather through the lens of its history—from its turn-of-the-century heyday to its postmodern decline. This exhibition features three artists who urge us to resist this false mirror and instead, to compel an immediate, direct, and intimate encounter with the present. Raha Raissnia's *Lapsus* slips between surfaces in an ever-shifting infusion of recognizable and abstract forms that are at once temporary and enduring. Claire Evans' *Digital Decay*—as it animates the process of saving an image file in incrementally lower file formats hundreds of times—explores the line between the cold rationality of the digital world and the mutability and unpredictability of human nature. Alongside, Gemma Pardo juxtaposes two interrelated videos in *Temperature*, magnifying the opposition between the carefully registered process of control and the inability to master bodily transformation.

Guest-curated by Gilian Rappaport

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Raha Raissnia was born in 1968 in Tehran. She currently lives and works in Brooklyn. Raissnia has exhibited throughout the US and Europe including at Anthology Film Archives, New York; the Isfahan Museum of Contemporary Art, Isfahan, Iran; and the Dundee Contemporary Art Festival, Scotland; among others. Raissnia's collaborator on this piece, Charles Curtis, is a professor of contemporary music performance at the University of California, San Diego and soloist and artistic director of the chamber music project, Camera Lucida. He has performed in major institutions and festivals in New York, Bordeaux, Paris, Berlin, Hamburg, Chicago, Ferrara, Austin, Los Angeles, and Boston.

Claire Evans was born in 1985 and currently lives and works in Portland, Oregon. She is a Rhizome Commission Recipient and has exhibited widely, including at the Brooklyn International Film Festival; Chapel Performance Space, Seattle; Portland Institute of Contemporary Art; and P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, Long Island City; among others.

Gemma Pardo was born in Galicia, Spain in 1976. She lives and works in London. Her many exhibitions include Arts Santa Mònica, Barcelona, Spain; Hastings Museum and Art Gallery, East Sussex, Angel Orensanz Foundation, New York; Tenerife Espacio de las Artes, Spain; and the Bloomberg New Contemporaries Exhibitions, Liverpool; among others.

New York-born, Saint Louis based Gilian Rappaport is a recent graduate of Washington University in Saint Louis. She was a Curatorial Intern at the Contemporary in 2009.

Image:

Raha Raissnia, *LAPSUS*, 2010

Composite projection of hand-painted, collaged 35 mm slides with oil on canvas and sound (tape cassettes). Dimensions variable
Sound by Charles Curtis. Courtesy of the Miguel Abreu Gallery

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